

# SUSTAINING MONTANA'S OUTDOOR RECREATION LEGACY



**STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE  
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN**

**2020-2024**



**Steve Bullock, Governor**  
**STATE OF MONTANA**



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**MONTANA STATE PARKS**

**Cover and section cover photos:**  
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**Cover and back cover photos:**  
First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park.

**Title page:**  
Giant Springs State Park

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*Developed by Montana State Parks  
A Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks*



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2020-2024

A high-angle photograph of a person standing on a wooden overlook deck, looking out over a vast, dense green forest. The person is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and an orange vest. The deck is made of wood and has a railing. The forest below is lush and green, with many trees visible. The overall scene is a beautiful outdoor recreation spot.

STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

## Acknowledgements

We acknowledge and appreciate the significant contributions by the SCORP Advisory Council who dedicated their time and expertise to assisting in crafting the 2020-2024 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. In addition, we would like to acknowledge and thank the many recreation professionals across the state that attended the facilitated group discussions and provided helpful input and feedback and those who provided recreation success stories from their communities.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Goals and Recommendations</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Goal 1:</b> Promote Outdoor Recreation Opportunities for All Montanans	<b>7</b>
<b>Goal 2:</b> Enhance Public Access to Outdoor Recreation Resources and Facilities	<b>11</b>
<b>Goal 3:</b> Support Economic Vitality of Communities and State	<b>15</b>
<b>Goal 4:</b> Improve Quality of Life Through Outdoor Recreation Experiences	<b>19</b>
<b>Goal 5:</b> Adapt Outdoor Recreation for a Changing Environment	<b>23</b>
<b>Goal 6:</b> Honor Montana's Outdoor Legacy	<b>27</b>
<b>Appendices:</b>	
<b>Appendix A:</b> Public Land Maps	<b>31</b>
<b>Appendix B:</b> Facilitated Group Discussion Report	<b>36</b>



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

STEVE BULLOCK  
GOVERNOR



JOHN WALSH  
LTC GOVERNOR

January 2014

Dear Friends:

As Montanans, parks and outdoor recreation are our way of life. Montana is home to magnificent landscapes and abundant opportunities to get outside. Recreation truly is an integral part of our heritage, including hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and skiing. It also attracts more than 10 million visitors from other states each year, creating a \$1.8 billion industry in Montana and supporting over 64,000 jobs—a major contributor to the State's tourism economy.

I am pleased to present this bold effort to ensure these opportunities continue to exist and expand. Montana's 2014-2018 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), titled *Creating a Vibrant Future for Montana's Outdoor Recreation Heritage*, provides a roadmap that enhances recreation service provision and holistically grows our outdoor heritage. This document sets the benchmark for recreation policy throughout Montana and guides the disbursement of federal dollars from the vitally important Statewide Land and Water Conservation Fund that supports community recreation projects throughout Montana.

Managers at the federal, state, local, and Tribal level are being met with diverse and critical challenges to meet growing demands, while maintaining high-quality experiences. We must proactively address these challenges together and support the broad significance of our public lands for improved quality of life of residents, sustained economic vitality for communities, and opportunities to attract new business and visitors.

Unlike previous plans, this SCORP calls to action Montana's recreation providers, industry, and citizens to collaborate on a seamless system of management of natural, cultural, heritage, and recreational resources. I commend the Parks Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the SCORP Advisory Committee for crafting the strategy with strong public involvement and thorough data collection. It represents a framework that ensures residents and visitors of all ages, abilities and backgrounds are able to get outside and explore more.

I urge each of you to answer the challenges set forth in this plan as we strive to sustain Montana's heritage with new initiatives, diverse partnerships and collaboration at all levels. Montana truly is *The Last Best Place*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Bullock".

STEVE BULLOCK  
Governor



# SUSTAINING MONTANA'S OUTDOOR RECREATION LEGACY 2020-2024

Montanans value outdoor recreation, making it central to how we interact with the natural environment and with each other. Sustaining Montana's wild places while promoting our outdoor recreation legacy is central in the development of this Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Our state depends on outdoor recreation for physical and mental health, enhanced quality of life, community well-being, and support of the economic vitality of the state. The goals we have put forward in this plan take into account the diverse constituencies in Montana, while capitalizing on the existing resources our state has to offer.

Twenty nine percent of Montana's lands are publically owned (Vincent et al., 2017) creating a backdrop for a variety of outdoor recreation activities. In a recent survey of resident travel in Montana, scenic driving (35%), day hiking (19%), and watching wildlife (16%) were some of the top outdoor recreation related activities (ITRR). However, we know that outdoor recreation is more than just activities, it is about experiences people have while engaging in activities in the natural environment (Moore & Driver 2005). This broad definition can include a hike through the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex, skiing down the slopes at Discovery Ski Area, listening to an interpretive talk at Pictograph Cave State Park, or swimming at the outdoor Butte-Silver Bow Aquatic Center. SCORP is intended to be inclusive with how we define outdoor recreation. As such, our hope is that this SCORP will reach a diversity of outdoor recreation providers and be used as the guiding outdoor recreation document that helps set priorities in the state.

## What is SCORP?

A Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is required of every state to be eligible for Land and Water Conservation funds (LWCF). Since 1965, Montana has received over \$38 million in LWCF state side appropriations to enhance and sustain outdoor recreation resources in the state. Montana State Parks hold the authority to represent and act for the state to work with the Department of the Interior for the LWCF Act.

This newest version of SCORP "Sustaining Montana's Outdoor Recreation Legacy 2020-2024" has been a collaboration between Montana State Parks and the University of Montana in an effort to develop a concise and easily digestible plan. As such, this plan builds on the existing resources in the state including Montana's previous SCORP effort. Our goal with this plan is to not overwhelm readers with data and findings, but to provide goals and recommendations while highlighting some of Montana's amazing outdoor recreation legacy.

## Utility of SCORP



This plan acts as a resource for outdoor recreation providers and organizations. The goals and recommendations should guide future planning efforts, assist with grant applications, and be a unifying vision of outdoor recreation for the state. These plans are produced by all 50 states and are recognized by local, state, and federal agencies as being the primary guiding document for outdoor recreation. Which means this SCORP document can be used as justification in



Wayfarers State Park

## how to use this document

There are several features of this SCORP that we want to highlight to help you use the document more efficiently.

1. We have developed a chapter to correspond with each goal. This is to help you navigate the document and find the information that is most relevant to you.
2. Look for the   icons for quick facts and resources to help with your outdoor recreation planning needs.
3. Each chapter has vignettes of communities, organizations, and programs that are making a difference in Montana for outdoor recreation. We recognize we may have missed something exceptional happening in the state. We want to encourage you to share your story even if it did not make it in this round of SCORP.
4. In an effort to make this plan efficient and easy to read, we moved some material to the appendix including current maps of public and tribal lands and findings from our facilitated group discussions.

grant applications, future planning efforts, and assist organizations in justifying resources. The Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals (SORP) is a resource for organizations who may want to know how to utilize SCORP for planning, management, and research. Additionally, SORP has an electronic database of all 50 states SCORP reports.

Planning Process

This plan is possible because of the hard work and dedication of our SCORP Advisory Council (see pg. II). The Advisory Council was comprised of outdoor recreation representatives from public and private sectors, local, state, and federal agencies, and advocacy organizations. With the guidance from the Advisory Council we developed a planning process that met the intent of SCORP. The approach was to utilize facilitated group discussions to gather input from the outdoor recreation community and pair that with existing data sets to develop a robust set of goals and recommendations.

The primary data collection effort was three facilitated discussion groups held in March of 2019 in Kalispell, Butte, and Billings. Over 300 people were invited to attend our meetings to share ideas about trends, needs, and goals for the next five years. We then paired the major themes from the discussions with existing data on recreation trends in Montana (Appendix B). This provided a foundation for our SCORP Advisory Council to develop goals and recommendations.

REFERENCES

For more information about the specifics of SCORP and LWCF please visit <http://stateparks.mt.gov/recreation/lwcf.html>

SORP: <https://www.recpro.org/>

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Chief Plenty Coups State Park



Note from the Director of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

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## Goals and Recommendations



# Goals and Recommendations

There is overwhelming support across Montana to continue to sustain our outdoor recreation legacy. As such, we believe our goals and recommendations

adhere to this guiding principle and provide thoughtful recommendations that can help us achieve this overarching objective. These goals and recommendations are further discussed in the subsequent chapters.

To further illuminate our goals and recommendations we have provided vignettes and stories of outdoor recreation all-stars in Montana. Our hope is that these stories along with the goals and recommendations inspire us all to sustain the outstanding outdoor recreation Montana has to offer.



## GOAL 1:

### Promote Outdoor Recreation Opportunities for All Montanans

#### Recommendation: Support outdoor recreation participation for underserved, disadvantaged, and persons with disabilities

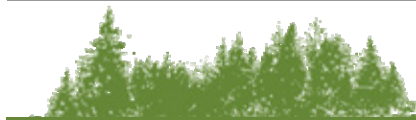
- ◆ Promote a statewide effort to inventory outdoor recreation opportunities that meet ADA accessibility standards
- ◆ Support education for recreation providers that encourages the use of access-based standards
- ◆ Partner with outdoor recreation providers to encourage outreach and education focused on promoting accessible sites

#### Recommendation: Provide outdoor recreation education for all

- ◆ Promote the integration of outdoor recreation and natural education in school curriculum
- ◆ Advocate for public/private partnerships to enhance education on stewardship, land ethic, Leave No Trace principles, and outdoor recreation related skills



Whitefish Legacy Trails



## GOAL 2:

### Enhance Public Access to Outdoor Recreation Resources and Facilities

#### Recommendation: Support data collection efforts that address visitor management challenges and opportunities

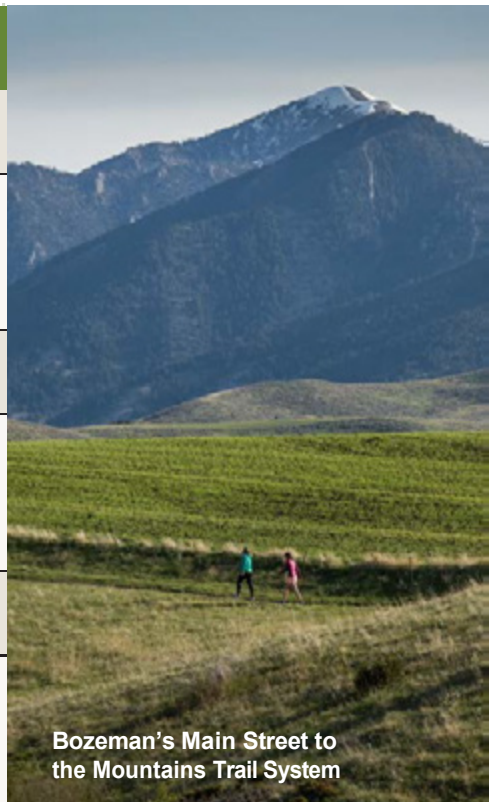
- ◆ Take steps towards the creation of a central recreation asset map system that displays recreation opportunities across the state
- ◆ Develop interagency collaborative data collection effort to gauge statewide and regional outdoor recreation related visitor use

#### Recommendation: Collaborate across boundaries on public, tribal, and private lands and water access issues

- ◆ Assist in the establishment of long-term funding for an Access Coordinator that works across jurisdictional boundaries
- ◆ Utilize existing datasets to identify "locked" public land and develop cross jurisdictional strategies to find solutions

#### Recommendation: Improve and expand front country outdoor recreation opportunities

- ◆ Improve community to community outdoor recreation connectivity through the use of multi-scale planning
- ◆ Promote funding opportunities to develop, improve, and maintain front country outdoor recreation



Bozeman's Main Street to the Mountains Trail System





## GOAL 3:

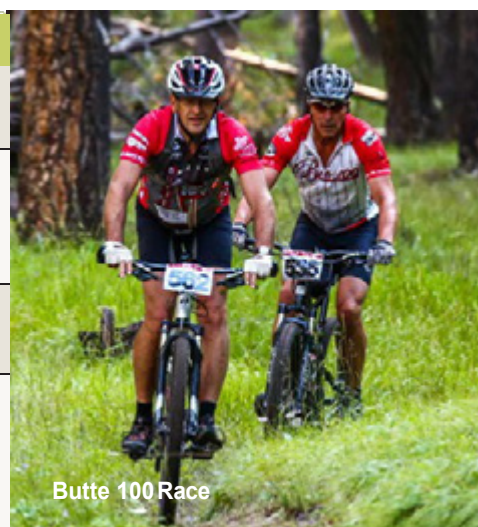
### Support Economic Vitality of Communities and State

#### Recommendation: Continued investment in the outdoor recreation industry and economy

- ◆ Support and expand the efforts of the Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation
- ◆ Promote data collection efforts focused on the outdoor recreation economy
- ◆ Expand workforce training and education for outdoor recreation industry

#### Recommendation: Diversify funding sources for outdoor recreation opportunities in and around communities

- ◆ Support the development of a "one stop shop" for outdoor recreation related grants
- ◆ Develop a communication strategy to inform the diversity of outdoor recreation entities about LWCF funding opportunities



Butte 100 Race



## GOAL 4:

### Improve Quality of Life through Outdoor Recreation Experiences

#### Recommendation: Engage senior, youth, and health-challenged populations in healthy outdoor recreation

- ◆ Promote of physical exercise and outdoor recreation opportunities directly to seniors
- ◆ Coordinate outdoor recreation efforts with partners already working with senior and health challenged populations
- ◆ Partner with education providers to develop an outdoor recreation curriculum for youth

#### Recommendation: Promote the health benefits of outdoor recreation

- ◆ Collaborate with healthcare industry to develop effective outdoor programming and facilities
- ◆ Partner with businesses to support and connect workplace health promotion programs to outdoor recreation opportunities



Helena's "Don't Fence Me In" Trail Run



## GOAL 5:

### Adapt Outdoor Recreation for a Changing Environment

#### Recommendation: Integrate with current natural hazard preparedness and response efforts

- ◆ Promote coordination and communication between outdoor recreation managers and emergency management and first responders
- ◆ Encourage outdoor recreation organizations to develop natural hazard emergency response plans

#### Recommendation: Integrate outdoor recreation planning with land use and community planning efforts

- ◆ Promote sustainable building and development for outdoor recreation infrastructure (green building, LEED, etc.)
- ◆ Encourage outdoor recreation specific climate projections and information for the outdoor recreation industry



Communication regarding fire activity in state parks



## GOAL 6:

### Honor Montana's Outdoor Legacy

#### Recommendation: Conserve Montana's outdoor and natural resources

- ◆ Balance outdoor recreation use with ecological function of natural resources including fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- ◆ Integrate social and ecological goals in outdoor recreation planning efforts.

#### Recommendation: Strengthen connection with tribes through outdoor recreation

- ◆ Integrate tribal voices in outdoor recreation planning efforts
- ◆ Develop collaborative strategy with tribal members and affiliations for managing, interpreting, and sharing the value of Montana's critical heritage, culture, and historic sites
- ◆ Promote LWCF funding opportunities for outdoor recreation to tribes

#### Recommendation: Protect and preserve historic sites and heritage resources

- ◆ Continued support for preservation of historical sites and resources including tribal lands, battlefields, cultural sites, etc.
- ◆ Encourage continued education and interpretation of Montana's heritage resources.







# Promote Outdoor Recreation Opportunities for AllMontanans



Outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences should be available to all Montanans. The outdoor recreation community actively works at providing opportunities that meet the needs of all; however, continued support and development is still necessary. Currently, 13% of Montanans have a disability with the most common disability being ambulatory (Erickson & von Schrader, 2016). To increase persons with disabilities participation in outdoor recreation, a statewide inventory of outdoor recreation opportunities is needed. There is a need for a more holistic understanding of what opportunities



### Did You Know?

The U.S. Forest Service has been a leader in creating accessible opportunities for recreation through universal design. They offer an online accessibility guidebook that your outdoor recreation organization can use as a reference <https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/>

exist and what opportunities are needed. Part of this effort should also include an understanding of the outdoor recreation facilities utilize universal design and/or are Americans with Disabilities Act and Architectural Barriers Act accessible. This could be in the form of a consolidated inventory of assets at all jurisdictional levels across the state (e.g. state, county, local). This inventory could be integrated as a GIS map layer to make these sites and facilities known and available to all.

Asset mapping of ADA accessible facilities is just one step in the process. Communicating what Montana has to offer is also needed.



## GOAL 1:

### Promote Outdoor Recreation Opportunities for All Montanans

#### Recommendation: Support outdoor recreation participation for underserved, disadvantaged, and persons with disabilities

- ◆ Promote a statewide effort to inventory outdoor recreation opportunities that meet ADA accessibility standards
- ◆ Support education for recreation providers that encourages the use of access-based standards
- ◆ Partner with outdoor recreation providers to encourage outreach and education focused on promoting accessible sites

#### Recommendation: Provide outdoor recreation education for all

- ◆ Promote the integration of outdoor recreation and natural education in school curriculum
- ◆ Advocate for public/private partnerships to enhance education on stewardship, land ethic, Leave No Trace principles, and outdoor recreation related skills

This can take the form of capitalizing on existing organization like MonTECH (<http://recreation.ruralinstitute.umd.edu/mt/>), devoted to increasing outdoor recreation participation for people with disabilities. State level organizations like Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, can also be a partner in communicating with residents by making sure their ADA resources page is known across the state (<http://fwp.mt.gov/recreation/ctb/links.html>).

Providing outdoor recreation for all Montanans also means engaging in education. Most notable is connecting children to nature through education. Research demonstrates that regular exposure to nature and outdoor learning greatly improves social well-being and contributes to children's behavioral, cognitive, and emotional development (Norwood et al., 2019; Bolling et al. 2019). Therefore, it is imperative that the outdoor recreation community advocates for the integration of outdoor play and connection to nature

in the classroom. This can be formal through the development of outdoor recreation curriculum or informal like unstructured outdoor playtime. Collaborations should be developed between outdoor recreation organizations and the Montana Department of Public Instruction, Department of Public Health and Human Services, other state agencies and health care partners. In addition, public/private partnerships should



### Did You Know?

The Rural Institute at the University of Montana offers education, training, and research on how to connect and improve the lives of people living with disabilities. Visit their website to see how they might become a partner with your organization <http://ruralinstitute.umd.edu/>

The National Parks Service's "Every Kid in a Park" program waives park entrance fees for 4th graders and their families. <https://www.nationalparks.org/our-work/campaigns-initiatives/every-kid-park>



**27%** of the people living in the United States had a disability in 2014. The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention reports that more than **one in four Montana adults** experience disability.



be established and utilized to teach every Montanan stewardship, sustainable recreation practices, land ethic, and outdoor recreation-related skills. Integration of outdoor education in school curriculum (Adopt-A-Fish with FWP, Trout in the Classroom with Trout Unlimited, Project WET, Project WILD, Leaf Pack Network, Hooked on Fishing Program, National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), and Leave No trace.



## Did You Know?

Visit the U.S. Access Board to find the most up-to-date standards for ADA and ABA. This includes information on shared use paths, outdoor developed areas, and recreation facilities <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities>

The Children and Nature Network is a great resource to learn about the benefit of natural spaces for children in your community. They offer assistance to municipal leaders across the U.S. in partnership with National League of Cities to create improved nature access for low-income communities. <https://www.childrenandnature.org/>



Information and image courtesy of Whitefish Legacy Partners

**Whitefish Legacy Trails:** In 2015, the City of Whitefish, Trust for Public Land, MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and F.H. Stoltze Land & Lumber Company, along with community partners, secured a 3,022-acre conservation easement in Haskill Basin, east of Whitefish Lake for wildlife habitat, drinking water protection, and public recreation. Trail easements were secured on the protected F.H. Stoltze Land & Lumber Co. as well as adjacent City of Whitefish, Iron Horse, and Whitefish Mountain Resort properties to establish two trailheads connected by 5.5 miles of trail. In 2016, the City of Whitefish and Whitefish Legacy partners received an LWCF grant to support the construction of two new trailheads, a bridge and a boardwalk as part of the new 5.5-mile trail. In addition to the LWCF grant, other grants were secured along with community fundraising efforts to fully fund the project. The trails along with the bridge and boardwalk were completed and opened for public use in 2018. The project added new trail access 2.3 miles from the center of downtown, providing a gateway to connect the community to the protected lands in Haskill Basin with an ADA accessible interpretive loop trail and picnic area at Reservoir Trailhead and new winter access for Nordic skiing at the Big Mountain trailhead, creating year-round multi-use destinations for locals and visitors.



**Butte Ridge Waters:** From 2005-2017, the community of Butte-Silver Bow did not have a public outdoor swimming pool. That changed on June 26, 2018 with the opening of Ridge Waters water park! This water park was brought to life by generous donations, the passing of a bond, support from the Butte community and an LWCF grant of \$150,000. Ridge Waters has become a summer hot spot for the Butte community and surrounding communities with amenities including a lazy river, diving board, facilities for both water basketball and water volleyball, climbing wall, slides, and play structure. In fact, the water park attracted over 35,000 visitors in the shortened 2018 season!





**Billings Parks and Recreation:** Billings Parks and Recreation has utilized several forms of funding to complete new projects or replace and refurbish existing facilities. One primary form of funding comes from Park District 1. Park District 1 was created in 2012 to assist Billings Parks and Recreation annually with \$1.3 million in funding for deferred maintenance and life-cycle replacement of park amenities that would have otherwise been removed or closed. In addition, Park District 1 provides \$700,000 annually for improved park maintenance and operations. Utilization of this funding stream along with LWCF funding has allowed for the completion of many major projects including the installation of a Sprayground in place of an old wading pool, tennis court resurfacing, new inclusive playground equipment and other new facilities.



**17% of children** (under 18 years of age) in the U.S. had a disability in 2014. About **3% of school aged children** had a condition that limited their ability to walk, run, or take part in sports or games.

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US Census Bureau (CDC.gov)



## Did You Know?

Bozeman's Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS) provides educational opportunities for kids to explore the outdoors and understand the relationship between science and nature.  
<http://www.outdoorscience.org/>

Missoula YWCA's GUTS (Girls Using Their Strengths) program empowers young girls to discover and utilize their strengths through community service projects, after-school groups and summer wilderness adventures.  
<https://ywcaofmissoula.org/services/girls-empowerment-guts/>



A man and a woman are walking a black and white dog on a rocky trail. The woman is wearing a light blue jacket and the man is wearing a dark jacket. They are walking towards the camera. The landscape is a vast, open plain with a rocky ridge in the foreground. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. In the distance, there are low mountains or hills. The overall tone is natural and scenic.

## Enhance Public Access to Outdoor Recreation Resources and Facilities

First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park



**A**ccess to public lands, outdoor recreation resources, and facilities is a hallmark of Montana's outdoor recreation legacy. Access can mean different things to different people and therefore requires a level of specificity when using the term. For example, in Montana, 3.08 million acres of state and federal lands are landlocked by private lands which prevents legal access for outdoor recreation (Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership). Alternatively, access



### Did You Know?

The Trust for Public Land provides a free mapping system displaying parks within communities across the country. This tool can visually display the need for parks in certain areas, the percentage of city land set aside for parks, and how many residents live within 10 minutes of a park. <https://www.tpl.org/>

Tree Search is a free searchable database from the United States Forest Service that allows users to access roughly 52,500 full-text articles related to ecology, environment, wildlife, natural resource management, fire, forest health, climate change, forest products, and people. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/treesearch/>

can simply mean that a community may not have adequate front country opportunities like trails to get outside on a daily basis. Across our facilitated group discussions, we heard from outdoor recreation leaders that they wanted to enhance and promote access to opportunities. This ranged

## GOAL 2:

### Enhance Public Access to Outdoor Recreation Resources and Facilities

#### Recommendation: Support data collection efforts that address visitor management challenges and opportunities

- ◆ Take steps towards the creation of a central recreation asset map system that displays recreation opportunities across the state
- ◆ Develop interagency collaborative data collection effort to gauge statewide and regional outdoor recreation related visitor use

#### Recommendation: Collaborate across boundaries on public, tribal, and private lands and water access issues

- ◆ Assist in the establishment of long-term funding for an Access Coordinator that works across jurisdictional boundaries
- ◆ Utilize existing datasets to identify "locked" public land and develop cross jurisdictional strategies to find solutions

#### Recommendation: Improve and expand front country outdoor recreation opportunities

- ◆ Improve community to community outdoor recreation connectivity through the use of multi-scale planning
- ◆ Promote funding opportunities to develop, improve, and maintain front country outdoor recreation

from connectivity between trails, access to landlocked public lands, and a more comprehensive understanding of outdoor recreation facilities and resources in the form of online and interactive maps.

In an effort to develop public information tools to better illustrate public access areas, a central outdoor recreation asset, multi-layer map system is needed. This would allow for greater transparency in regards to what recreation opportunities are available and where. Ideally, this multi-layer system would display maps from all participating agencies including FWP, BLM, USFS, NPS and include county and city level data as well. Along with asset mapping, a long-term visitor use monitoring program should

be considered. This can be as simple as using existing data collection efforts and learning about how they interface with state and community level planning. More complex would be an interagency collaborative data collection effort. A comprehensive visitor monitoring plan would allow for an inventory of sites and activities statewide and could assist in efforts to alleviate pressure from high-use areas during peak seasons.

Montanans deeply value access to public lands and state waterways. Access is a point of pride and many residents would like to have more of a voice in the decision-making process regarding their public lands (Grau & Schultz, 2018). Montana has taken a step in a positive direction with regards to public access by funding the DNRC Public Access Coordinator position. As part of this document we want to echo the need for continued support for this critical role in the state. The person in this role can work collaboratively with communities



According to the 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, **3.9 million hunters hunted on public land** compared to 9.7 million who hunted on private lands. [https://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/subpages/nationalsurvey/nat\\_survey2016.pdf](https://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/subpages/nationalsurvey/nat_survey2016.pdf)



and residents on access challenges, help secure public access, and promote existing access programs like FWP block management program. The outdoor recreation community should consider the promotion and support of datasets that identify "locked" public land and to develop cross jurisdictional strategies to find solutions including public-private agreements and easements.

While Montana has vast backcountry recreation opportunities, front country outdoor recreation opportunities should be improved and expanded. This includes non-wilderness federal lands and other landownerships in close proximity to urban centers. Planning efforts are needed to help communities work through the challenges associated with front country experiences. Developing a front country outdoor recreation plan can be daunting given uncertainty with landownership, risk and liability, and long-term funding. Therefore, efforts should be made to simplify outdoor recreation planning so even the smallest community can feel empowered to make their own outdoor recreation plan. There is a need for a "one stop shop" for community and outdoor recreation leaders to find grants, resources, and a network of people in the state who are working through similar challenges. In these community planning efforts, more consideration should be made for accurately mapping front to backcountry outdoor recreation connectivity and overall trail connectivity within and around communities. Additionally, increased funding for outdoor recreation facility maintenance (trail maintenance and improvements) should be considered.

**DNRC Public Access Coordinator:** In 2016, Montana Governor Steve Bullock created a public access specialist position within the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. This specialist position was created to identify and pursue key opportunities to increase public access to state trust lands, public lands and public waters in Montana, prioritizing high-value projects and bringing together private landowners, state, and federal land managers cooperatively to do so. Within the short time since the establishment of the position, coordination and cooperation across multiple jurisdictions of state and public lands has occurred. In addition, partnerships have been established and strengthened between landowners, land trusts, working groups, outdoor recreation industries, and outdoor recreationists and sportsmen.



## Did You Know?

The United States Forest Service's National Visitor Use Monitoring Program provides data on recreational visitation to National Forests and explores the details of that visitation including activity participation, duration of visit, satisfaction, demographics and more. <https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum/>

Montana Trails Recreation Park Association (MTRPA) is comprised of recreation professional from across the state. Members work collaboratively to improve recreation opportunities for all Montanans and in turn improve our quality of life! <https://www.mtrpa.info/>

OnX Maps provides statewide coverage maps differentiating public and private land boundaries. This allows hunters to identify public access points and property lines to ensure that they remain legal and ethical. <https://www.onxmaps.com/>







Information courtesy of Gallatin Valley Land Trust. Image by Diana Proemm.

**Bozeman's Main Street to the Mountains Trail System:** Spearheaded by Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLT), the Main Street to the Mountains trail system displays the power of a collective community vision, public/private partnerships and collaboration. As a cross jurisdictional project, many partners have worked together to expand and increase this trail system's connectivity segment by segment. Now over 80 miles in length, this trail system allows the community access from the core of Bozeman to the foothills of the mountains both north and south. In addition, the in-town trails allow for increased connectivity between neighborhoods, recreation centers, schools and more. The Main Street to the Mountains system has provided a space for residents and non-residents to recreate, be healthy and connect with each other and the landscape.

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## Did You Know?

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation partners with landowners, federal and state agencies, and other conservation organizations to secure or improve public access to elk habitat that can be enjoyed by hunters, hikers, anglers and more! <http://www.rmef.org/Conservation/PublicAccess.aspx>

Source: Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, 2018. Photo: Diana Proemm.

The 11.8-mile Headwaters Trail System in Three Forks serves as a designated gateway trail for the Great American Rail-Trail! More details can be found at <http://www.railtotrails.org/greatamericanrailtrail/route/montana/>.





# Support Economic Vitality of Communities and State



Outdoor recreation plays an integral role in Montana's economy; creating more than 71,000 jobs and generating \$7.1 billion in consumer spending (Outdoor Industry Association). Montanans believe the outdoor recreation economy is important to the economic future of the state (Headwaters). Montana's wealth of public lands and water resources create the ideal backdrop for communities and the state to develop a thriving economy around outdoor recreation. Montana boasts year round attractions and activities that contribute to the health and well-being of people and their communities.



### Did You Know?

Headwaters Economics is a Montana based organization that provides research services for organizations and communities. A notable tool they offer for free is the Economic Profile System that allows you to download socioeconomic reports for communities, counties, and states <https://headwaterseconomics.org/>

A success story from the last SCORP was creation of the Office of Outdoor Recreation (OOR). Since instituting this office there has been more connection between outdoor recreation organizations including partnerships between private, public, and non-profit entities to help solve critical planning and management challenges. To continue the momentum of the OOR, additional funding and staffing should be considered to continue support for the outdoor recreation economy in Montana. To continue the success of OOR, efforts should be made to collect relevant economic data in partnership between local, tribal, state, and federal entities focused on outdoor recreation. These data will be



## GOAL 3:

### Support Economic Vitality of Communities and State

#### Recommendation: Continued investment in the outdoor recreation industry and economy

- ◆ Support and expand the efforts of the Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation
- ◆ Promote data collection efforts focused on the outdoor recreation economy
- ◆ Expand workforce training and education for outdoor recreation industry

#### Recommendation: Diversify funding sources for outdoor recreation opportunities in and around communities

- ◆ Support the development of a "one stop shop" for outdoor recreation related grants
- ◆ Develop a communication strategy to inform the diversity of outdoor recreation entities about LWCF funding opportunities



Residents of Montana spend **\$3.61 billion** on outdoor recreation in the state each year!

critical in assisting outdoor recreation planning efforts. Collaboration efforts should be made with entities such as the Montana Department of Education and the Montana Department of Labor and Industry to expand technical workforce training and education for jobs in the outdoors. Continued connection with the Montana University of System, specifically the University of Montana Parks, Tourism, and Recreation Program will also help connect workforce training and jobs.

Since outdoor recreation is big business in Montana, it will be imperative to promote and market outdoor recreation to residents and beyond. To do so, outdoor recreation events should be amplified across the state to attract both residents and tourists. The creation of a coordinated recreation event calendar could assist in increasing awareness about these events. Montana should continue to hold outdoor recreation summits to forge and strengthen lasting partnerships between public and private entities. Lastly, partnerships between private, state, tribal, and federal entities should be created and

enhanced to identify and capitalize on shared opportunities to promote outdoor recreation in Montana.

Across the facilitated groups discussions participants identified that it was challenging to find grant opportunities for their outdoor recreation related needs. Establishing a "one stop shop" for outdoor recreation related grants would allow for greater transparency and utilization of funding available for outdoor recreation projects. Likewise, Montana State Parks should continue to promote LWCF funding opportunities across the state and encourage a diversity of applications. Montana is fortunate to offer LWCF stateside grants and the collective outdoor recreation community should continue to encourage legislative action to authorize LWCF monies in the future.



### Did You Know?

The Outdoor Industry Association provides state level economic data on outdoor recreation, information about current trends, and tools and trainings to help your organization succeed. <https://outdoorindustry.org/>



Montana's outdoor recreation economy generates **\$7.1 billion** in consumer spending annually and more than **71,000 jobs!**





**Seeley Lake Winterfest:** Winterfest is an event that highlights Seeley Lake and brings surrounding communities together to enjoy the many winter opportunities available in the Seeley Lake area. Winterfest began in 1991 and encapsulated the spirit and sport of prior events centered around winter sports held in Seeley Lake including "SnowmobilaVous" and "Yamafest". These events evolved into Winterfest which now includes activities such as nordic skiing, snowmobiling, pond hockey, dog sled racing, the "Chamber Chill Plunge", and much more! During the relatively slow winter season, this event boosts the economy of Seeley Lake and showcases the unique winter recreation opportunities available in the area. Many visitors to Winterfest decide to return in the summer months to engage in other warm-weather recreation activities on Seeley Lake and in the surrounding mountains.



## Did You Know?

Montana State Parks administers five state and federal outdoor recreation programs to meet your organizations needs. This includes the Recreation Trails Program, Off-Highway Vehicle Program, Snowmobile Program, Land & Water Conservation Fund, and Accessible Playground Program. <http://stateparks.mt.gov/recreation/default.html>

The Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana conducts travel and recreation research for the state. Their primary focus is non-resident travel yielding statewide estimates of tourist visitation and expenditures. ITRR has a wealth of data and reports that can assist your outdoor recreation organization. <https://itrr.umt.edu/>



**Butte 100 Race:** The Butte 100 Race began in 2006 and was the brainchild of Butte bike enthusiasts. With 40 people registered for the first race, the race now sells out in under 2 hours and has grown to attract 350 racers from 13 different states and 2 countries. The Butte 100 has boosted Butte's economy through racers and spectators staying in hotels, dining at local eateries and enjoying the many amenities that Butte has to offer.



**Montana Governor's Cup Walleye Tournament:** The Montana Governor's Cup Walleye Tournament is an annual, three-day tournament held on Fort Peck Lake. Since its beginning in 1987, this event has been held to promote, protect and support the Fort Peck sport fishery, tourism and recreation. Anglers across Montana and the U.S. flock to Fort Peck to participate in this unique tournament. This tournament is unique because it is the only tournament in the state that is 100% payback, meaning that all entry fees, day money and big fish pots go back to the fishermen, with a total payout over \$120,000 in cash and prizes. With a maximum of 200 two-person teams accepted to participate, this is the single largest event in northeast Montana with the highest economic impact to the area with over \$500,000 pouring directly into local communities over the two-week period when anglers arrive and depart.



**Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation:**

The ever-growing outdoor recreation economy in Montana prompted the creation of the Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation in the fall of 2017. The need for a central office charged with growing and enhancing the outdoor recreation economy had been identified in documents such as SCORP and was supported by the outdoor recreation industry, conservation organizations and recreation user groups. The Office of Outdoor Recreation works to identify the unique needs and topics of Montana's outdoor recreation economy including direct industry support, growth and recruitment; outdoor recreation infrastructure access and opportunity; stewardship and conservation; education and workforce training and support; and, health and well-being. The office seeks to build and maintain state, federal and private partnerships to realize and achieve shared goals and visions regarding Montana's outdoor recreation economy.

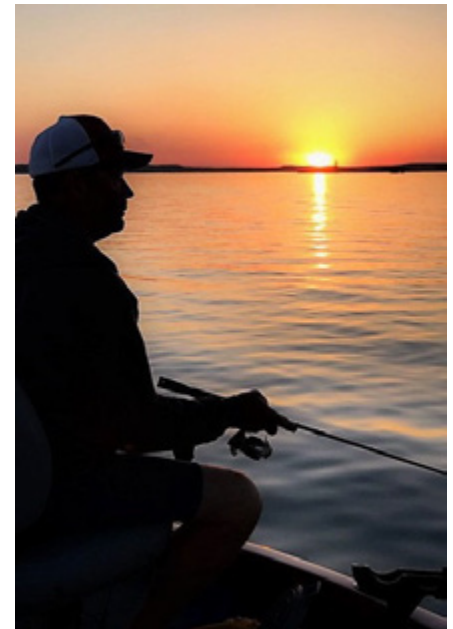


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Anglers spent **\$919.3 million** in more than **3.3 million angling days** in 2017.



Hunters spent **\$389.2 million** in more than **2.6 million hunter days** in 2017.





# Improve Quality of Life through Outdoor Recreation Experiences



Montana outdoor recreation provides a rich quality of life. People live here and move here because of access to fresh air, mountains, big sky, and open plains. Outdoor recreation experiences feed our souls and make us happy. Throughout the facilitated group discussions, members of the outdoor recreation community commented on the amazing resources that keep Montana's people physically and mentally healthy. While this is true there is still work to be done in the state to ensure all Montanans have the outdoor recreation opportunities that meet their needs. In 2017, 25% of Montanan adults reported no past month leisure time physical activity and furthermore, nearly half (45%) of Montanan adults did not meet the Federal physical activity guidelines for aerobic activity (recommended aerobic physical activity = at least 150 minutes/week of moderate intensity aerobic activity, or 75 minutes/week of vigorous intensity, or an equivalent combination). physical activity is an integral part of achieving and maintaining health. By engaging more Montanans in outdoor play, participation in leisure time physical activity and aerobic physical activity can improve.

Reaching seniors and other health-challenged demographics to encourage their engagement in outdoor recreation should be a top priority for the state. Leisure activity involvement for seniors is associated with reduced risk of chronic illness, improved physical strength, and increased muscle strength (Grove and Spier, 1999). Researchers have found that through leisure activity, older adults experienced positive psychological and mental health aspects, such as happiness, enjoyment, and positive

## GOAL 4:

### Improve Quality of Life through Outdoor Recreation Experiences

#### Recommendation: Engage senior, youth, and health-challenged populations in healthy outdoor recreation

- ◆ Promote of physical exercise and outdoor recreation opportunities directly to seniors
- ◆ Coordinate outdoor recreation efforts with partners already working with senior and health challenged populations
- ◆ Partner with education providers to develop an outdoor recreation curriculum for youth

#### Recommendation: Promote the health benefits of outdoor recreation

- ◆ Collaborate with healthcare industry to develop effective outdoor programming and facilities
- ◆ Partner with businesses to support and connect workplace health promotion programs to outdoor recreation opportunities



Over the next 20 years, **29,000 Montanans** could meet the CDC's recommended level of physical activity through walking and bicycling (30min/day) saving **\$878.3million** in healthcare costs.

emotions and feelings (Buettner & Fitzsimmons, 2002; Heo & Lee, 2010). Partnerships between outdoor recreation organizations and those already working in this arena (e.g. healthcare, AARP) could help bolster programming for seniors and other health challenged groups. This could be increased coordination between health care providers, Veterans Affairs, senior care facilities, senior playgrounds, advocacy groups and others to educate and expand outdoor recreation opportunities for seniors.

In 2017, approximately 12% of Montanan adults reported experiencing frequent mental distress. Frequent mental distress is defined as 14 or more days out of the past 30 during which an individual's mental health was "not good." Promoting the mental health benefits of outdoor recreation is just as important as the

physical health benefits. There is a need to further partner with the health care industry to develop effective outdoor programming for those who might be struggling with mental health. Montana has one of the highest per capita Veteran populations in the US (Montana Veterans Affairs). We know that programs that connect Veterans to the outdoors are effective in promoting recovery from physical and mental injury or illness. Further, the outdoor recreation community should integrate into the workplace and develop partnerships that connects health promotion programs to outdoor recreation opportunities.



#### Did You Know?

About 1 in 10 Montana residents are Veterans. Wounded Warriors Project offers Project Odyssey which uses nature and recreation to heal the spirit. <https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/programs/combat-stress-recovery-program/project-odyssey>



According to the US Census Bureau, senior citizens (people over the age of 65) account for **14.6% of the US population**. Outdoor recreation organizations should recognize that activities and programs should span from youth to seniors.



### Bozeman's Highland Glen Nature

**Preserve:** The Highland Glen Nature Preserve (HGNP) is a 430-acre plot of land in Bozeman. The land was purchased by Bozeman Health in 1956 and a land use license was signed in 2013 by Bozeman Health, Gallatin Valley Land Trust and the City of Bozeman to allow for the creation of trails for public use. These lands were opened for public use with the intention of helping everyone have more opportunities to live a healthy outdoor lifestyle. Walking, hiking and biking opportunities in a natural area not only yield physical benefits but other wellness benefits as well! In addition, HGNP provides habitat for an abundance of wildlife including mule deer, white-tailed deer, fox, beaver, raccoons and other small mammals and serves as important winter/early spring range for elk.

HGNP trails are for pedestrian and cycling use, as well as groomed cross-country ski trails for winter use in partnership with Bridger Ski Foundation. In addition, cropland on this plot is leased for farming and rangeland is leased for grazing. Bozeman Health bears the weight of property taxes and other expenses including invasive weed management while Bridger Ski Foundation

carries the expense of grooming the winter ski trails and Gallatin Valley Land Trust ensures security of fence entrances and exits and maintains the summer hiking trails.

HGNP serves as a segment of the Main Street to the Mountains trail system and boosts community connectivity by connecting several neighborhoods and retirement facilities to the main trail system allowing for access to downtown Bozeman and the foothills of the Gallatin range.



In 2017, only **13% of Montana adults** reported eating 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day. The USDA recommends eating 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. Outdoor recreation organizations can assist in filling this critical health need by offering healthy snacks at events.



### Did You Know?

Montana's Department of Public Health and Human Services provides public health data for your organization. In particular, the Montana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) provides information about health behaviors, mental health, and physical activity. <http://ibis.mt.gov/>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that one in five U.S. children are obese or overweight. The outdoor recreation community can assist in offering programs that get children outside to engage in physically active recreation. <https://www.cdc.gov/>



**Helena's "Don't Fence Me In" Trail Run:** The "Don't Fence Me In Trail Run" began in 2000 to celebrate the trail system that Prickly Pear Land Trust was building on newly acquired land on Mount Ascension, with funding from an Open Space Bond and community financial support. Once the land had been acquired, trails were built and the community was invited to experience and enjoy the new trail system. The event began as a 10K, but now there is something for everyone with a 30K, 12K, 5K walk or run, and 5K dog-walk courses. With the help of staff members and hundreds of volunteers, this trail run has offered Prickly Pear Land Trust an incredible outreach opportunity to help the community of Helena understand its role in protecting open space and the importance of connecting people to that land.



**Missoula's Fort Missoula Regional Park:** Fort Missoula Regional Park (FMRP) is a multi-phase municipal park project that first opened in late April of 2017. This park project was funded via a County-wide General Obligation Parks and Trails Bond. Through surveys and support from stakeholders, including users, residents, and businesses the need for trails, shelters, picnic areas and play fields was communicated clearly. FMRP has blossomed into a community gathering space by providing facilities for which the community asked including large rectangular fields, an all-inclusive playground and opportunities for all. FMRP has been a wild success with the rectangular fields nearing capacity! In addition, FMRP has been host to the largest soccer, lawn volleyball, rugby, ultimate, pickleball, and lacrosse tournaments in Missoula history in the past three seasons, noting that these events and tournaments range from the local level to international level. The historic district at Fort Missoula has been expanded as well with over 5 miles of trails, thorough interpretive material and other opportunities available.



## Did You Know?

To increase and encourage patient physical activity, Missoula healthcare professionals are utilizing the Missoula Prescription (Rx) Trails Program. Trails include .5 and 1-mile routes at McCormick Park and a 1-mile Rx trail at Fort Missoula Regional Park. <https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/2409/Rx-Trails>



**Bozeman Ice Festival:** The Bozeman Ice Festival began in the mid-1990s as two separate events by Barrel Mountaineering and Northern Lights Trading Post. Joining forces in 2006, the Bozeman Ice Climbing Festival was born. Developing partnerships with the USFS and Gallatin County, a unique cost-sharing agreement was made to allow road plowing on the way to the climbing site, Hyalite Canyon. This unique event attracts newcomers to the sport, experienced climbers and spectators and is an opportunity to provide instruction and grow the sport in a safe and accessible way. This festival has been one of the primary fundraisers for plowing Hyalite Road and providing winter access to Hyalite Canyon.

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A full-page photograph of a mountain biker riding down a dirt trail. The rider is wearing a blue shirt, tan pants, a white helmet, and sunglasses. The trail is surrounded by tall grass and trees. In the background, there is a vast valley with rolling hills and a large mountain peak under a blue sky with white clouds. A small blue silhouette of a mountain range is positioned above the title text.

# Adapt Outdoor Recreation for a Changing Environment

Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park



**A** changing climate can have negative impacts on outdoor recreation experiences in Montana (Askew & Bowker, 2018). These impacts often have cascading consequences where a climate event causes multiple impacts across space and time (Smith et al., 2016). For example, warming river temperatures may close streams to fishing and displace anglers to only a few rivers in the state and ultimately lead to crowding and conflict. In the instance of wildfire, parks and forests might close due to fire activity and smoke may settle in a valley preventing people from using their community outdoor recreation areas. There is recognition from climate scientists, social scientists, and outdoor



## Did You Know?

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides an evaluation framework and resource guide for planning, designing and building green infrastructure. <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/water-conservation/greeninfrastructure/>

Building recreation facilities with LEED approved materials and meeting LEED certification standards can save water, energy, and resources and generates less waste leading to a more environmentally conscious facility! <https://new.usgbc.org/leed>

recreation professionals that warmer temperatures and changing climates will continue to alter many of the recreation experiences Montanans love. It is therefore imperative for the outdoor recreation community to be part of efforts that integrate outdoor recreation into climate and environmental planning.

To help adapt to changing climates, a cross jurisdictional hazard



# GOAL 5:

## Adapt Outdoor Recreation for a Changing Environment

### Recommendation: Integrate with current natural hazard preparedness and response efforts

- ◆ Promote coordination and communication between outdoor recreation managers and emergency management and first responders
- ◆ Encourage outdoor recreation organizations to develop natural hazard emergency response plans

### Recommendation: Integrate outdoor recreation planning with land use and community planning efforts

- ◆ Promote sustainable building and development for outdoor recreation infrastructure (green building, LEED, etc.)
- ◆ Encourage outdoor recreation specific climate projections and information for the outdoor recreation industry



During the 2017 fire season, **76% of all Montana residents experienced decreased air quality** and 69% of surveyed Montanans over 18 stated that smoke affected their participation in outdoor activities

preparedness plan and redirection plan for outdoor recreation opportunities should be developed on a regional and statewide scale. Greater coordination and communication is needed between emergency management (e.g. first responder), community municipal departments (e.g. public health), and outdoor recreation managers to create clear and concise messaging to recreationists. Outdoor recreation organizations should plan internally for climate changes and have outdoor recreation alternatives ready to communicate in the case of a natural hazard.

A statewide, interagency working group should be developed to establish best practices for outdoor recreation providers to adapt and become more resilient to environmental change in Montana. This working group should collaboratively and creatively address workforce and staffing needs during emergency response situations. In other words, discussing who will perform certain tasks when other individuals are sent into the field for emergency response and

are unable to carry out their outdoor recreation duties.

Outdoor recreation should be integrated and considered in community and land use planning efforts. Efforts should be made to facilitate sustainable approaches to outdoor recreation planning and programming. For example, working build and develop outdoor recreation infrastructure under Leadership in



## Did You Know?

The Montana Climate Assessment was published in 2017 and was a product of Montana residents and organizations acknowledging climate change and seeing the need to gather and synthesize relevant scientific information. Chapters in the Montana Climate Assessment include "Climate Change in Montana", "Water and Climate Change in Montana", "Forests and Climate Change in Montana", and "Agriculture and Climate Change in Montana". <http://montanacclimate.org/>



Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards and other green building guidelines and principles.

Acquiring climate data is necessary for future outdoor recreation planning. Collaborating with entities like NOAA and the Montana Climate Office is imperative to understand how to bring relevant climate data to outdoor recreation end-users. The outdoor recreation community should be asking for climate data that assists in planning and provides information about when and how to adapt to changing conditions during peak seasons and shoulder seasons.



### Did You Know?

Based at the University of Montana, the Montana Climate Office works to provide climate-related information to Montanans. Whether it be helping stakeholders interpret climate information or providing information for policy decision making, the Montana Climate Office has the resources to help!

<https://climate.umt.edu/default.php>

Information and image courtesy of United States Forest Service



### Did You Know?

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) can bring forth both recreational and ecological impacts. From displacing native species to clinging to boat motors, aquatic invasive species can wreak havoc in the places we love most and alter our recreation experiences. It is likely that aquatic invasive species management strategies will have to adapt to account for climate change which can lead to an increase in species range and life cycles. To learn more about Montana aquatic invasive species and prevention efforts, visit <http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/species/ais/>



Approximate actual size of the aquatic invasive species Zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*) pictured.





## Did You Know?

With increasing wildfire frequency and intensity, Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) offer a framework for managers and planners to become better fire-adapted. Recreation managers and planners can adapt these plans to meet their needs as well. To find your Community Wildfire Protection plan, visit your County's website or visit <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry/fire-and-aviation/cwpps>.

Climate Smart Missoula and community partners are spearheading an effort to establish a community resilience plan in response to climate change and what climate change means for outdoor recreation. <https://www.missoulacclimate.org/healthy-community.html>

With fluctuating temperatures in spring, flooding has become a persistent and expected natural event. When spring flooding occurs, river access can be limited and fishing access sites can close. Be aware and be prepared!

**Recreation and Wildfire:** Montana's relationship with wildfire is ever-changing. Decades of fire suppression has led to larger and higher intensity fires that affect the landscape, wildlife and recreation opportunities across the state. To adapt to this changing environment, land management agencies are turning the tides and re-thinking our relationship with fire and recreation. With incident management teams comprised of Montanans who know the land and share their fellow Montanan's values, these teams collaboratively work together with forest and park managers to find ways to minimize impacts, avoid closures, promptly reopening areas if closures occur, and working to develop the wildfire conversation in a positive direction. Incident management teams work closely with forest and park managers to make informed decisions and to develop communication strategies for information distribution. Information is communicated efficiently and effectively with Montanans and our visitors through means of media outlets, social media, bulletin postings, Inciweb and more. Fire is no longer a surprise in Montana, it is a new reality. Great strides have been made to communicate the effects of fire and post-fire environments including benefits to habitat, wildlife and fisheries, new opportunities for recreation and more.

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## Honor Montana's Outdoor Legacy

Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park



Montana is rich with natural and cultural assets. People come from around the world to take in the sights at our parks and forests, to learn about the western way of life, and to connect with the deep traditions of our Native American culture. There is a need to protect and conserve these resources even as outdoor recreation increases in popularity across MT. The term “ecosystem services” is often used to represent the variety of natural capital that provides diverse goods and services to human societies (e.g. water, air, habitat) (Gomez-Baggethun & Ruiz-Perez, 2011). Often, an economic amount is assigned to these services, however, more recently research has



### Did You Know?

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks’ education center, Montana WILD, offers interpretive and educational displays illustrating the diversity of wildlife in Montana. In addition, Montana WILD provides many free educational programs for 4th to 12th grade classes including Outdoor Recreation, Living with Wildlife, Montana Fish, Wildlife Management, Meet the Mammals, and more! <http://fwp.mt.gov/education/montanaWild/programs/>

sought to understand the intrinsic value as well. Outdoor recreation planning should balance user demands with fish, wildlife, and their habitats and promote healthy ecological functioning. Across our facilitated group discussions, participants echoed the need to “protect” “conserve” “maintain” and “restore” the natural environment of Montana.

In Montana, we are fortunate to have seven Indian reservations that



## GOAL 6:

### Honor Montana’s Outdoor Legacy

#### Recommendation: Conserve Montana’s outdoor and natural resources

- ◆ Balance outdoor recreation use with ecological function of natural resources including fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- ◆ Integrate social and ecological goals in outdoor recreation planning efforts.

#### Recommendation: Strengthen connection with tribes through outdoor recreation

- ◆ Integrate tribal voices in outdoor recreation planning efforts
- ◆ Develop collaborative strategy with tribal members and affiliations for managing, interpreting, and sharing the value of Montana’s critical heritage, culture, and historic sites
- ◆ Promote LWCF funding opportunities for outdoor recreation to tribes

#### Recommendation: Protect and preserve historic sites and heritage resources

- ◆ Continued support for preservation of historical sites and resources including tribal lands, battlefields, cultural sites, etc.
- ◆ Encourage continued education and interpretation of Montana’s heritage resources.

offer a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. However, it was noted by the SCORP Advisory Board that the outdoor recreation community needs to engage more effectively with tribes on outdoor recreation planning efforts. Therefore, a collaborative strategy should be developed with tribal members and organizations for managing, interpreting, and sharing the value of Montana’s cultural heritage and historic sites. In addition, tribal voices should be integrated in statewide outdoor recreation planning efforts in the future. Tribal integration and communications should stem beyond mainstream recreational organizations and extend to other community engagement facets such as art councils, community events and more. The hope of this recommendation is that we can lay a foundation to start the conversation and develop pathways for funding,

planning, and connection to tribal outdoor recreation needs.

In an effort to conserve Montana’s heritage and historic resources, comprehensive recreation plans should integrate perspectives from a diverse group of stakeholders and identify places for continued preservation and support. Continued education and outreach should foster



### Did You Know?

The Mission Canyon Natural Bridge is located on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and is a towering 60-foot natural wonder. In addition to sightseeing at the natural bridge, Mission Canyon is also the site for the annual Hays Pow Wow. The Hays Pow Wow is open to the public and allows visitors experience the traditions, music and dance of the indigenous peoples from the Fort Belknap Reservation, surrounding areas and even Canada!



Montana is home to **7 Indian reservations** and the tribes within Montana include the Blackfeet, Chippewa Cree, Confederated Salish & Kootenai, Crow, Fort Belknap, Fort Peck, Little Shell Chippewa, and Northern Cheyenne.



awareness surrounding Montana's outdoor heritage for future generations. Planning efforts should focus on identifying natural resources that are unique to a specific and efforts should be made to balance outdoor recreation use with the resource base.

## Did You Know?

Montana has 55 State Parks covering over 46,000 acres! State parks are a great way to explore natural and heritage resources across the state. <http://stateparks.mt.gov/>

Travelers' Rest State Park (Lolo, MT) contains the only archaeologically verified campsite of the Lewis and Clark Expedition! With a visitor center and museum on site, there are educational and interpretive materials available to learn more about the historic and cultural significance of this state park. <http://stateparks.mt.gov/travelers-rest/>

Bannack State Park (Dillion, MT) is the site of the first major gold discovery in Montana and was Montana's first territorial capital. While there are many activities and amenities available at Bannack State Park, its claim to fame is Bannack Days. This annual summer event transforms Bannack back to its heyday with historic displays, tours, gold panning, re-enactors and more! <http://stateparks.mt.gov/bannack/>



### Makoshika State Park:

Makoshika State Park, voted 2017 USA Today's Best Montana Attraction, is located in Glendive, MT. This unique state park is Montana's largest at roughly 12,000 acres and is home to historic natural and cultural treasures such as dinosaur fossils and Native American tools. The Cretaceous-Paleogene (K-Pg) boundary line is the layer of the Earth's crust made from the displaced ash and debris from the volcano eruption or asteroid strike and can be found in a select few areas on Earth; Makoshika is one of those areas! You can see it, hike to it and touch history! With 11 designated trails, visitor center, campground, archery range, disc golf course amphitheater, and a functioning

paleontology lab, there is something for everyone at Makoshika. In addition to these amenities, Makoshika hosts campfire programs, a Shakspeare in the Parks production every summer, paleo experience, and the famous annual Buzzard Day. Buzzard Day includes Native American drum groups and dancers, train rides, games, bouncy houses, 5K, 10K, and 1-mile fun run.



Information courtesy of Montana State Parks, Twin Sisters image courtesy of Kristi Powell, pillar image courtesy of Chris Dantic



**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks “Kids to Fish” Program:** “Kids to Fish” is a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region 6 program that allows kids, their families, and friends’ access to free fishing rods and basic tackle including hooks, sinkers and bobbers. With 43 locations to pick up fishing gear across Montana’s Hi-Line, this program encourages kids to get out and fish even though they may not have the necessary gear to do so on their own. More information on the program and gear pick up sites can be found at [http://fwp.mt.gov/news/newsReleases/fishing/nr\\_1078.html](http://fwp.mt.gov/news/newsReleases/fishing/nr_1078.html).

**Right: Tate Langel, FWP summer education technician, inspects fishing rods at the Hill County Library in Havre.**



Information and image courtesy of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks



**Flathead Lake Honoring Day:** Flathead Lake Honoring Day is an educational event hosted by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes and the Flathead Lake Biological Station. This event is the product of years of collaboration and partnership between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. The goals for the event are to promote stewardship, conservation and to forge an appreciation for Flathead Lake and the organisms that call it home. High school age students from surrounding schools are given the opportunity to learn about lake fisheries and fish identification, lake conservation and ecology, aquatic invasive species and boating safety. (Information courtesy of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks)

## REFERENCES

Gómez-Baggethun, E., & Ruiz-Pérez, M. (2011). Economic valuation and the commodification of ecosystem services. *Progress in Physical Geography*, 35(5), 613-628.

Montana Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs. Tribal Nations. <https://tribalnations.mt.gov/tribalnations>

## Did You Know?

The Missouri River borders the Fork Peck Indian Reservation and flows into Fort Peck Lake. With over 1,520 miles of shoreline and a maximum depth of 220 feet, there are ample opportunities for recreation including fishing, hiking, camping and more!

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument is the site of the Battle of Little Bighorn which was fought on June 25-26, 1876 between the U.S. Army’s 7th Cavalry and the Lakota and Cheyennes. With a visitor center and self-guided driving tour, visitors are given the opportunity to learn about the complex history leading up to the battle, the battle itself, the aftermath, and the importance of remembrance and reflection. <https://www.nps.gov/libi/index.htm>

In Montana, the Bureau of Land Management are home to wild and scenic rivers, Wilderness areas, and National Monuments that connect us with Lewis and Clark’s journey. <https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/montana-dakotas>



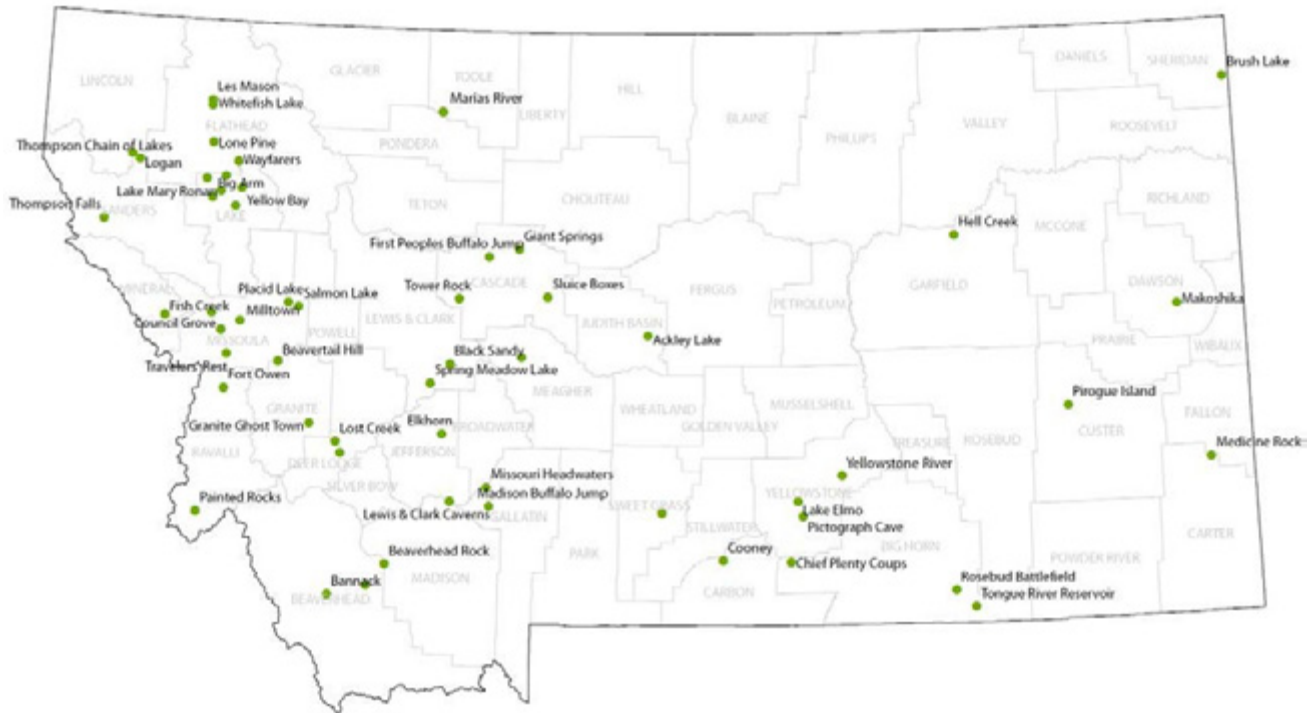


# Appendices

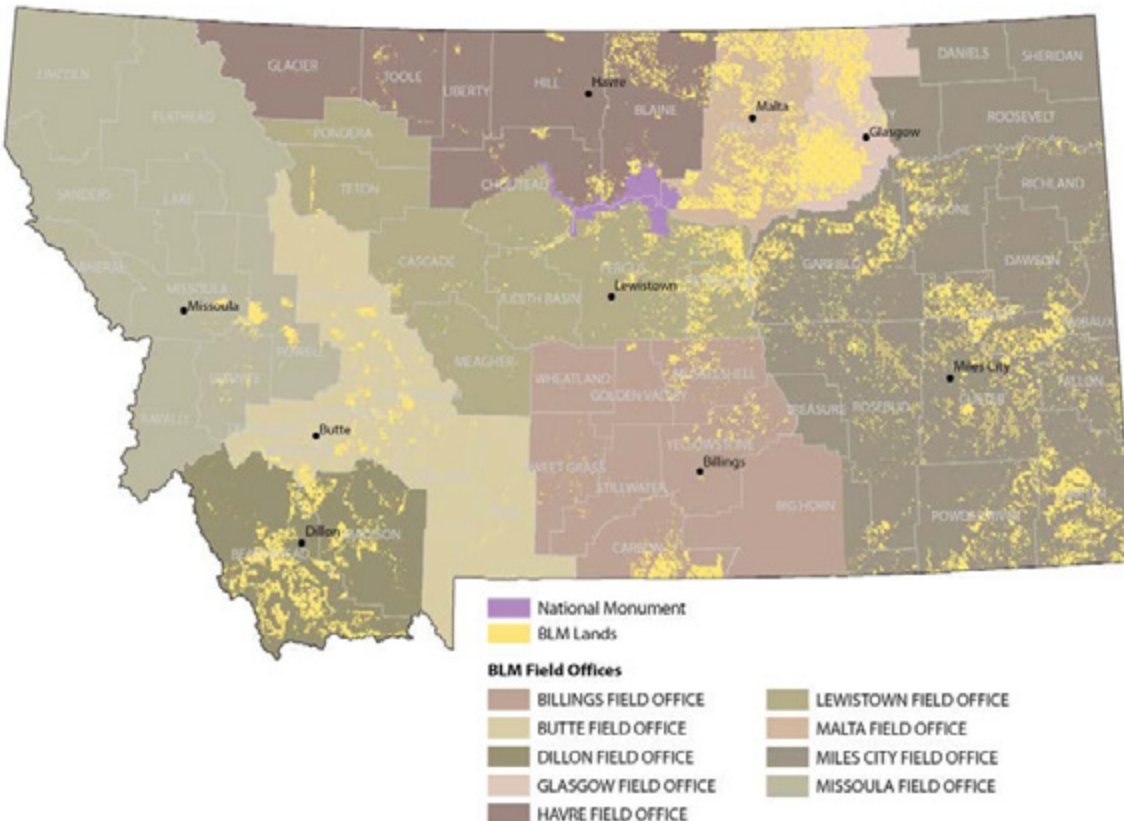


## APPENDIX A Public Land Maps

### Montana State Parks

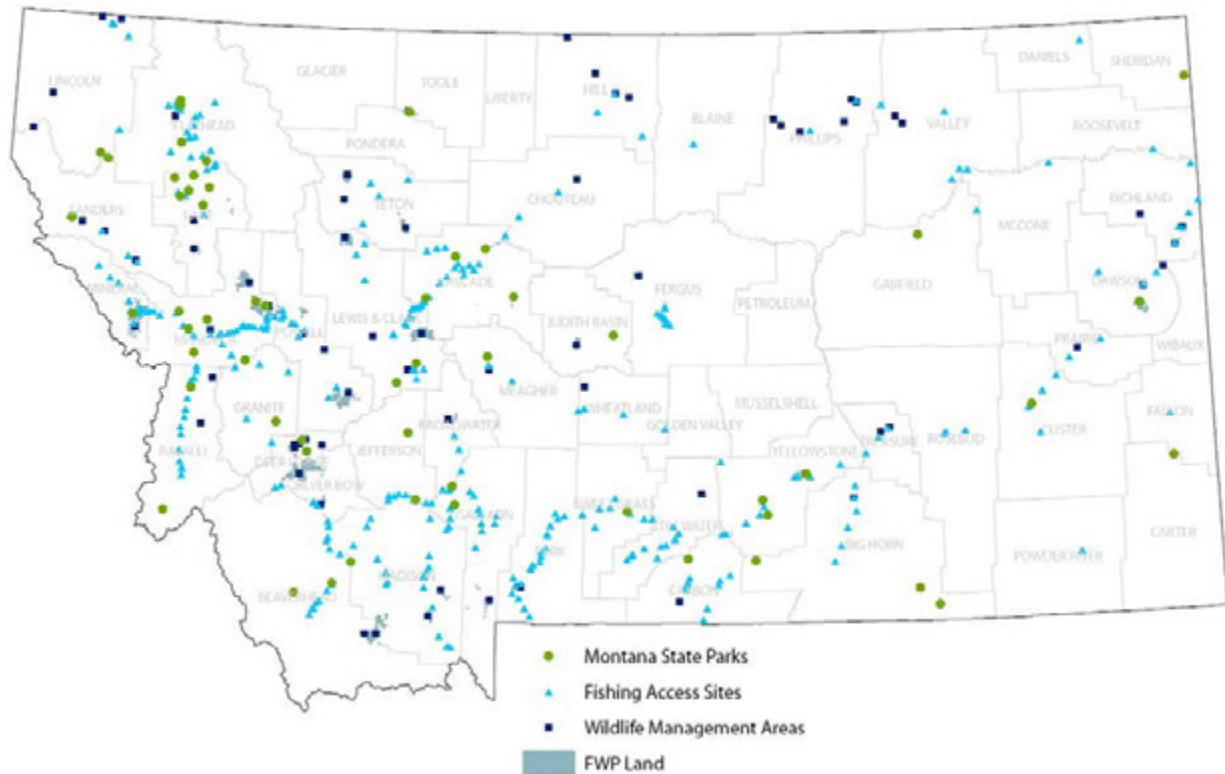


### Bureau of Land Management in Montana

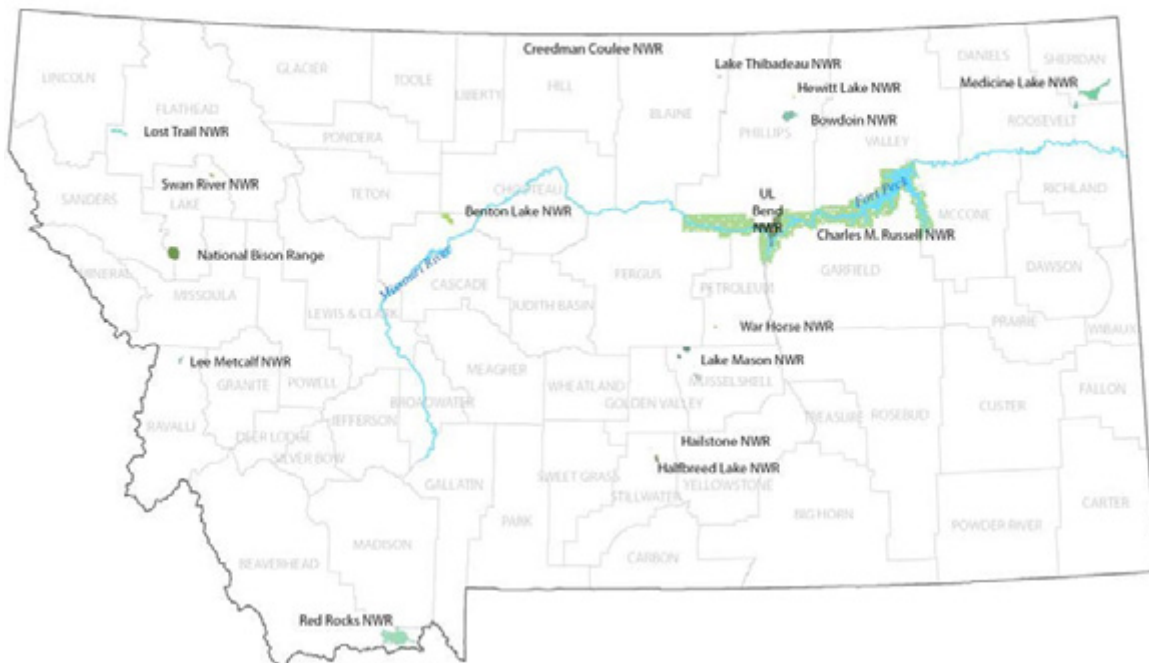




## Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Lands

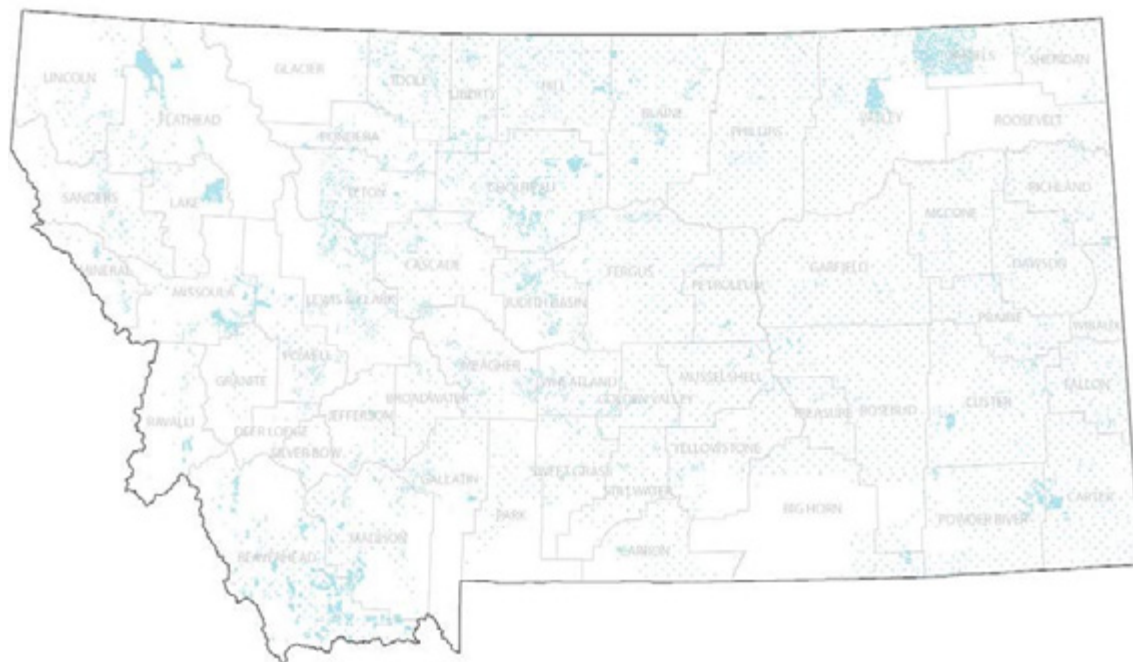


## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Lands and National Wildlife Refuges in Montana

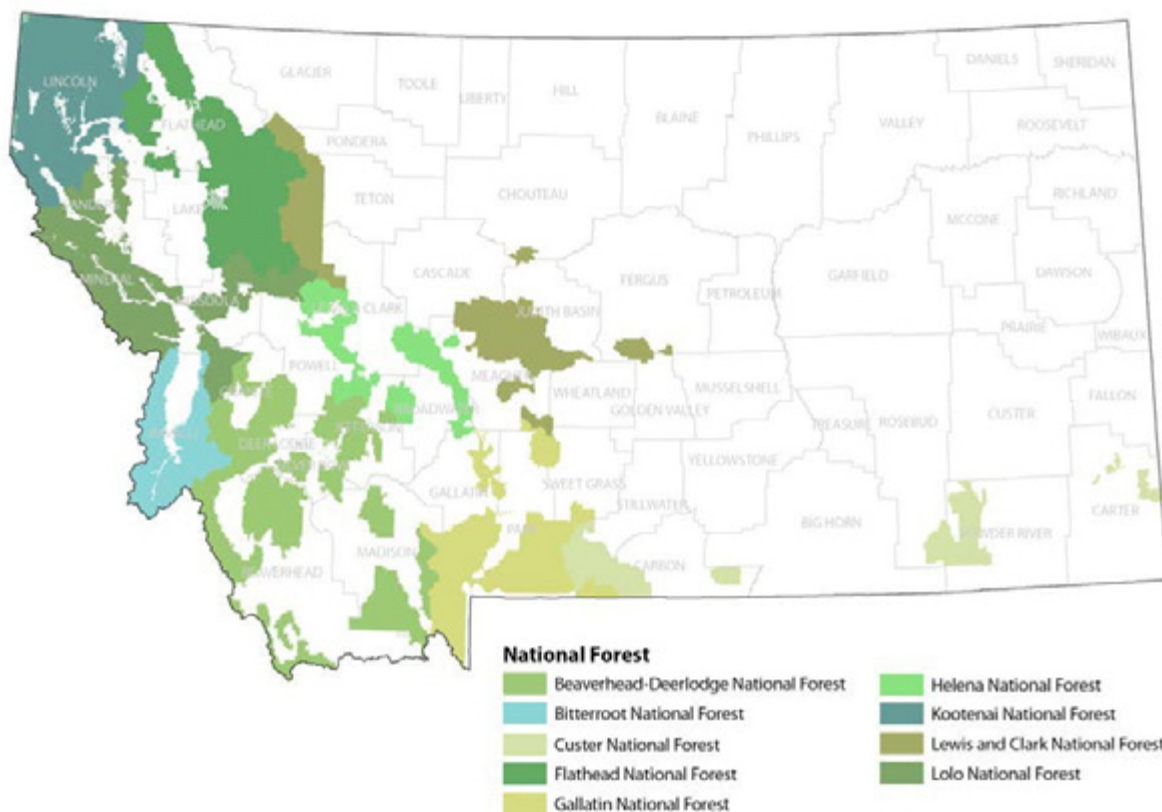




## Department of Natural Resources and Conservation State School Trust Lands

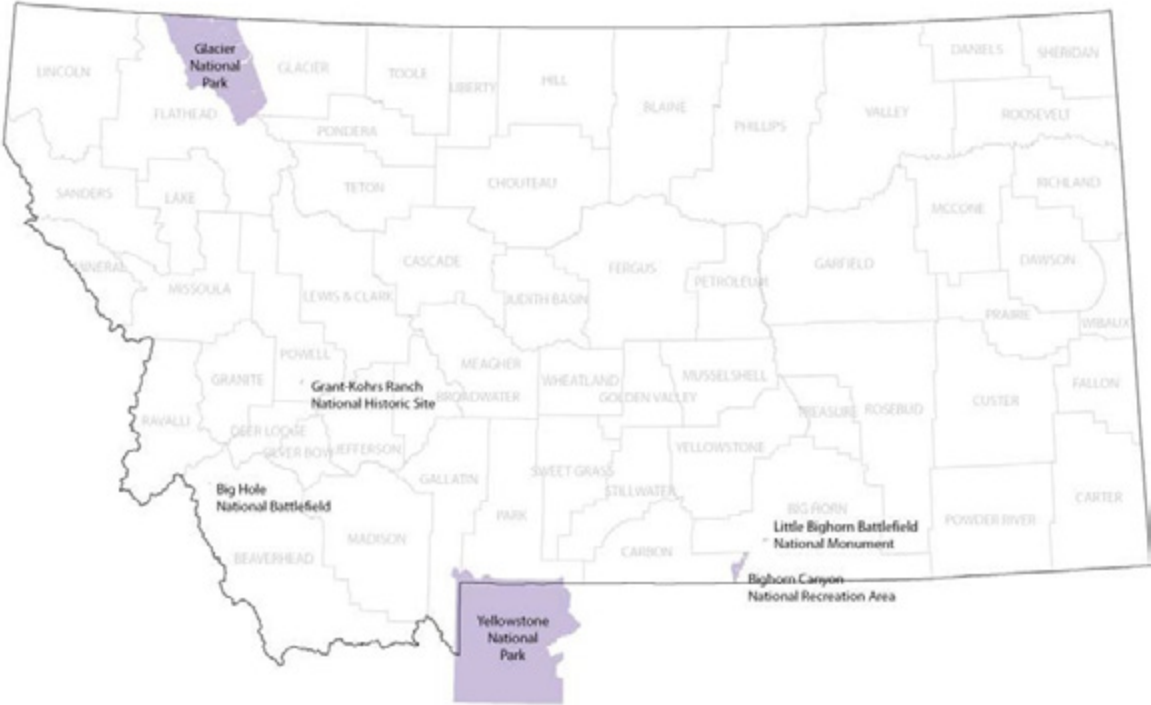


## National Forests in Montana





# National Park Service in Montana





## APPENDIX B Facilitated Group Discussion Data Collection

### Introduction:

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is the guiding document for community outdoor recreation projects across Montana. An updated SCORP is required in order to receive Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) dollars. Utilization of LWCF monies acquired through the 2014-2018 SCORP paved the way for many success stories across Montana including the creation of the Montana Governor's Office of Outdoor Recreation, the Montana State Park Strategic Plan, and a Montana DNRC Public Access Coordinator. In addition, many small communities across the state applied for LWCF grant funding for local community projects which can be found below.

### 2018 PROPOSED LWCF PROJECTS

SPONSOR	PROJECT NAME	AMOUNT
1 Alberton	Hank Roat Memorial Park Renovation	\$100,000.00
2 Billings	Rose Park Playground Replacement	\$150,000.00
3 Boulder	Parks Project	\$52,065.50
4 Deer Lodge	West Side Park Playground Upgrades	\$21,000.00
5 Ennis School District	Ball Fields, Track and Playground Renovation	\$60,300.00
6 Gallatin County	Regional Park Phase IV	\$150,000.00
7 Helena	Cherry Park ADA Playground	\$80,000.00
8 Lewistown	Creekside Restroom & Kiosk	\$138,000.00
9 Milltown State Park	Bandmann Flats Trailhead & Trails	\$145,000.00
10 Shelby	Shelby Swimming Pool Gutter Replacement	\$55,000.00
11 Thompson Falls	Pool Improvements	\$46,700.00
12 Townsend School District	Playground Replacement	\$61,587.85
13 Wolf Point	Wolf Point Swimming Pool Renovation	\$150,000.00
		<b>\$1,209,653.35</b>

### Methods:

Three facilitated group discussions were held in Kalispell, Butte and Billings during March of 2019. These locations were chosen to reflect the diversity of recreation opportunities across the state. While Bozeman and Missoula were not chosen as meeting locations, it was well understood that their needs and concerns would be represented at these meetings as well. We did recognize that some rural, far-reaching communities may have had trouble attending the meetings, but we tried to cast the widest net feasible due to the time constraints for the data gathering process.



After meeting locations, dates and times were set, the contact compiling process began. Recreation professionals from across Montana received an invite via email to participate in one of the three facilitated group discussions. Invitees represented the wide breadth of recreation across the state, ranging from the federal level to municipalities, public entities to private, and agencies to small businesses. Upwards of 300+ professionals were invited to participate in one of the three discussions.

48 people RSVP'd for the Kalispell meeting, 41 people RSVP'd for the Billings meeting, and 74 RSVP'd for the Butte meeting. These meetings were scheduled for approximately three hours and attendees were divided into small groups, roughly 7-10 people per group and were asked to collectively and collaboratively answer several questions regarding outdoor recreation. Meeting participants were encouraged to wear their respective "hats" but also to think outside the box on a statewide level. A wide variety of comments and suggestions were provided at these meetings, however, it is unfortunately not feasible to address every comment or suggestion in this report. It should be noted that each comment provided at each meeting was taken into account and considered. Below is a collection of answers to the given prompts that were repeatedly mentioned across the three meeting locations.

### **Question 1: What makes Montana outdoor recreation great?**

This question yielded a wide array of answers ranging from specific activities such as hunting and fishing, to Montana's clean water and wilderness areas. While many specific answers were given, three broad categories appeared in Kalispell, Butte and Billings; access, year-round recreation opportunities, and Montanans collective pride in our recreation opportunities.

#### **1. ACCESS**

The term access was discussed at all three meetings in various ways and attendees were told to further push their definition of what they mean by "access". This included stream access (stream access laws), ADA compliance, forest access, public land access and access to recreation opportunities in both front country and backcountry.

#### **2. YEAR-ROUND OPPORTUNITIES**

Montana offers year-round recreation opportunities catering to any and all recreation interests. In the winter, there are world-class skiing opportunities, opportunities for snowmobiling, snowshoeing, ice skating, ice fishing, cross country skiing and much more. Spring, summer and fall offer opportunities for hiking, biking, wildlife watching, fly fishing, etc. The availability of year-round recreation opportunities makes Montana unique and allows residents to remain immersed in the outdoors no matter the season.

#### **3. SHARED STEWARDSHIP & PRIDE**

Due to the great access and year-round opportunities that Montana provides its residents, Montanans hold their pride and stewardship of the land to a very high standard. A common goal amongst residents is to care for Montana and the natural resources and recreation opportunities provided so that everyone can enjoy them into the future.



## **Question 2: What are the critical outdoor recreation needs in Montana?**

### **1. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES**

A common theme that was repeated many times was the dire need for alternative funding sources for outdoor recreation or the need to diversify funding sources. While the lack of funding/deferred maintenance is discussed heavily at the federal level, it is also a significant issue at the local level. An example was given highlighting community trail projects that have been completed, but now there is little to no money to maintain them.

### **2. NEED FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

Getting the youth back into unstructured outdoor play to foster local stewards of the land from a young age is crucial. This unstructured play could be in addition to programs, education and exposure to outdoor recreation and environmental issues.

### **3. ADA ACCESSIBILITY**

While there are some ADA accessible trails that allow for use of wheelchairs and strollers, there is a need for a greater amount of trails that allow for this type of use. This could include education and more widely available information for people who are interested in learning more about what constitutes as an ADA trail and where such trails may be found.

### **4. BETTER INTERAGENCY COORDINATION**

Interagency cooperation and coordination is essential in order to have a cohesive, statewide approach to outdoor recreation. A lack of interagency coordination can cause a spread of misinformation, create frustration between agencies/groups, and confusion amongst locals and tourists.

### **5. MORE EFFECTIVE VISITOR-USE MANAGEMENT**

Due to the large amount of people who visit Montana during a one year period, being able to efficiently and effectively manage them can cause a snowball effect in how the resources are cared for, used and managed. Education tools for visitors as it can be difficult for people to find information or know that the sources they're finding information is accurate, reliable and up to date. Understanding what type of experience visitors are looking for versus the experience that locals are looking for.

### **6. FACILITIES FOR SENIORS**

Montana has a growing need for infrastructure and opportunities that are related to the senior population of Montana. Not only is there a need to get youth out and interactive in regards to outdoor recreation but also keeping facilities available to continue that interest and activity in outdoor recreation around from a young age all the way through retirement. The concept of adult/elderly playgrounds were brought up during the meetings as a way to adapt to changing demographics and community needs. There are examples of playgrounds catering to seniors in large cities such as Beijing, London, Bangkok and Manchester.

### **7. "UMBRELLA" GROUP/STATEWIDE WORKING GROUP**

Montana has a large variety of stakeholders who have an interest in outdoor recreation. These stakeholders range from adventure companies to small businesses and governmental organizations. With such a large group of stakeholders all having similar needs and interests, it would be beneficial for Montana to have statewide working group with the sole purpose of gathering and compiling like information for easy access by stakeholders. This could include information regarding volunteers, funding opportunities and liability insurance for volunteers. This working group would relieve staff from having to spend a majority of their time coordinating these efforts and therefore allow for more time to be spent working on projects.



## **8. CENTRAL INFORMATION HUB/ONE INTERACTIVE SOURCE**

With tourism being one of the largest economic drivers for the state of Montana, a central location or interactive source to find information regarding travel and outdoor recreation opportunities would be an asset. This would not only be beneficial to tourists, but to locals as well. Finding current and accurate information can be a difficult task when there is such a large variety of opportunities across the state at all levels of difficulty and interest. Creating a user-friendly, multi-layered interactive platform would create a more cohesive space for agencies and organizations to cross-check material and ensure that recreationists are given reputable, up to date information.

**Question 3/4: What should be our top priorities for outdoor recreation in Montana for the next 5 years? Recommendations/action items for achieving those priorities?**

### **1. MAINTAINING QUALITY OF OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES/ EXPERIENCES**

With an increase in pressure on certain recreation areas, it is of the utmost importance to develop creative ways to displace some of this pressure out to other areas.

For example, Glacier National Park has been experiencing high visitation numbers and lacks the space and infrastructure needed to meet the demands of visitors. To combat this, managers and recreation professionals must collaboratively work together to develop activities and places to direct people towards, instead of just visiting "high-profile" areas such as the national parks. This can be achieved through cross-agency cooperation and collaboration utilizing tools such as advertising strategies, interpretive materials, and the possible implementation of an app that displays different recreation opportunities available in a given area. Creating a "one-stop shop", interactive application (in addition to traditional paper maps) with multiple overlays would allow for both locals and visitors to see all that is available. This in turn would likely alleviate pressure from popular recreation areas.

### **2. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION**

Education surrounding the importance of resource stewardship, conservation and environmental issues and addressing the consequences of overuse should be implemented in schools. Short programs (and the possibility of field trips) could be implemented discussing proper trail etiquette and the importance and benefits of recreating outside (both mental and physical health). In addition, teaching children and young adults what they can do to ensure the continued health of Montana's recreation opportunities and resources is crucial to ensure the establishment of a new enthusiastic and forward-thinking generation of land stewards.

### **3. FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

Funding for recreation has historically been an issue in Montana and was a hotly discussed topic throughout this data collection process. Not only funding for the establishment of new recreation opportunities, but the maintenance of already established ones. One solution is to diversify funding sources. Another is the establishment of a fund dedicated solely for outdoor recreation purposes. This fund could include monies for new projects or monies for maintenance or further acquisition. In addition, creating a plan to ensure the continued reauthorization of LWCF funding is necessary. A general recreation use license/fee would generate a new funding stream for outdoor recreation instead of the revenue generated from sources such as Pittman-Robertson, Dingell-Johnson or hunting/fishing licenses. These new funding sources would likely be implemented through means of legislation.











